

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended.

By this amendment, and without conceding to the outstanding rejections, the claims have generally been amended to address the alleged indefiniteness and to claim certain aspects of the invention with greater particularity. Regarding the written description rejection, Applicants respectfully note that support for the amended claims can at least be found in Figs. 1-6, 12, and 13 and the corresponding portions of the specification, as well as the Summary of the Invention.

In contrast to the features recited in the independent claims (see especially the last paragraph of each of Claims 1, 2, 8, 9 and 13), in Estakhri, if either of a corresponding pair of non-volatile memory locations 732, 733 is determined to be defective, then the whole memory block 727 is declared to be defective... and the defective block can no longer be used.

Since Estakhri does not teach or suggest the features in the amended independent claims, independent Claims 1, 2, 8, 9 and 13 are patentably distinguishable therefrom.

A Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

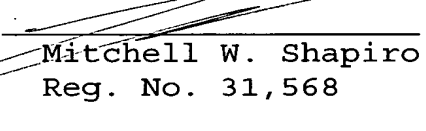
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account.

If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been requested separately, then such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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